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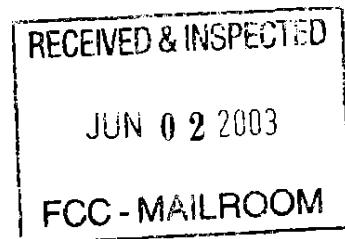
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Senate

State of Minnesota



May 12, 2003

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20544

WC Docket No. 03-90

RE: Section 271 Application of Qwest Communications, Inc.

Dear Ms. Dortch:

I am writing to support the request of Qwest Communications, Inc. for authority to provide intrastate long distance services in Minnesota under section 271 of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. I have closely followed and been engaged in shaping telecommunications policy on both the state and national level for more than 10 years. Currently, I serve as chair of the Minnesota Senate's Telecommunications Subcommittee. I also chair the National Conference of State Legislatures Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Interstate Commerce.

When Congress passed the 1996 Telecommunications Act, its intent was to open the local market, dominated by incumbent RBOCs, to competition. Seven years later, the results here in Minnesota are some of the best in the United States. Locally, approximately 45% of the business market has been captured by Qwest's competitors. Overall, competitors have approximately 25% of the market. While economic conditions have been challenging over the past few years, Minnesota's CLEC community has survived.

In addition to a strong CLEC presence, cable telephony and wireless providers have seen large increases in their market share. I want to get past the debate over competition in long distance so we can refocus our attention on the new forms of competition in telecommunications, particularly in local broadband.

A positive 271 order will benefit both residential and business consumers. Consumers will have the benefits of greater choice and the convenience of one telephone bill. Businesses will have another option in determining which long-distance provider to select. Rural telecommunications consumers will benefit from the diminished significance of LATAs, resulting in more choice,



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more reliable services, and more control over the services they purchase. Long distance costs are significant business barriers for the public and private sectors alike in rural Minnesota. More competition will reduce those barriers. While the primary benefit is to Minnesota consumers, Qwest's Minnesota employees will also benefit.

I believe Minnesotans will be better off if the FCC recognizes that Qwest has met its burden of establishing that competition exists, and that the time has come to let Qwest offer intrastate long distance service in Minnesota.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer my comments on Qwest's 271 application. If I can provide further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Kelley".

Steve Kelley
State Senator



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